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REMARKS

The Applicants request entry of the foregoing amendments so that claims 3, 9-11, 14 and 20-25 also belong to the elected invention.

Respectfully submitted,



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MARKED-UP VERSION OF REWRITTEN CLAIM(S)

3. (Amended) A method for evaluating polishing pad surface conditions as described in claim [1] 5, wherein removal of polishing fluid adhered to said polishing pad surface is performed by flowing gas onto said polishing pad surface.

9. (Amended) A method for evaluating polishing pad surface conditions as described in claim 5, further comprising the following steps:

[removing polishing fluid adhered to a polishing pad surface for at least an area of said polishing pad surface;
illuminating with light said area of said polishing pad surface from which said polishing fluid was removed;]

detecting fluorescence generated by said polishing pad due to said illumination;

further evaluating deterioration of said polishing pad surface based on an intensity signal of said detected fluorescence; and

outputting results from said evaluation based on the intensity signal.

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10. (Amended) A method for evaluating polishing pad surface conditions as described in claim [7] 9, wherein[:] a fluorescence image is obtained from the fluorescence generated by said polishing pad [is detected and a fluorescence image is obtained]; and deterioration due to contaminants on said polishing pad surface is evaluated based on said fluorescence image.

11. (Amended) A method for evaluating polishing pad surface conditions as described in claim [7] 9, wherein said information of said evaluation results is displayed on a display.

14. (Amended) A device for evaluating polishing pad surface conditions as described in claim [12] 16, wherein said polishing fluid removing means removes polishing fluid [adheres] adhered to said polishing pad surface by blowing a gas onto said polishing pad surface.

16. (Amended) A device for evaluating polishing pad surface conditions comprising:

means for [removing polishing fluid] removing polishing fluid adhered to at least an area of a polishing pad surface;

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means for [illuminating] using light to illuminate said area on said polishing pad surface from which said polishing fluid was removed [b] by said polishing fluid removing means;

means for capturing images imaging an area illuminated by said illuminating means and obtaining an image of said polishing pad surface;

first evaluating means for [evaluating] evaluating deterioration of said polishing pad surface based on an image of said polishing pad surface obtained through said image capturing means; and

first outputting means for [outputting] outputting information of results from said evaluating means.

20. (Amended) A device for evaluating polishing pad surface conditions as described in claim 16, further comprising:

[means for removing polishing fluid removing polishing fluid adhered to at least an area of a polishing pad surface;

means for illuminating using light to illuminate said area on said polishing pad surface from which said polishing fluid was removed b said polishing fluid removing means;]

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means for detecting fluorescence [detecting fluorescence] generated by said polishing pad due to illumination from said illuminating means;

second evaluating means for [evaluating] evaluating deterioration of said polishing pad surface based on an intensity signal of fluorescence detected by said fluorescence detecting means; and

second outputting means for [outputting] outputting information of results from said evaluation.

21. (Amended) A device for evaluating polishing pad surface conditions as described in claim 20, wherein[:] said fluorescence detecting means [detects fluorescence generated by said polishing pad and] obtains a fluorescence image; and said second evaluating means evaluates deterioration of said polishing pad surface due to contaminants based on [a] the fluorescence image obtained by said fluorescence detecting means.

22. (Amended) A device for evaluating polishing pad surface conditions as described in claim 20, wherein said second outputting means displays information of results evaluated by said second evaluating means to a display.

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23. (Amended) A method for producing thin-film devices comprising the following steps:

[a step for] forming a thin film on a substrate;

[a step for] planarizing a surface of said substrate by polishing said substrate surface on which said thin film is formed using a polishing pad;

[a step for] cleaning said planarized substrate; and

[a step for] applying a resist to said cleaned substrate and exposing a pattern;

wherein[, in] said planarizing step[, light is used to illuminate a surface of said polishing pad used to polish said substrate surface, light reflected from said polishing pad due to said illumination is detected, surface deterioration of said polishing pad is evaluated based on a detection signal from said reflected light, and a surface condition of said polishing pad is restored based on results from said evaluation] includes steps for evaluating surface conditions of the polishing pad according to the method claimed in claim 5.